



*State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913*

*PH (517) 373.7708 | FAX (517) 373.1450*

*[www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/gilbert/](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/gilbert/)*

For Immediate Release  
April 21, 2005

Contact: Scott Starr  
517-373-7708

## **Gilbert bill creates agriculture roundtable at DEQ**

**LANSING** – Legislation was passed by the Michigan Senate this week that would create an agriculture and rural communities roundtable in the Department of Environmental Quality, said bill sponsor Sen. Jud Gilbert, R-Algonac.

Senate Bill 226 creates a roundtable to evaluate how laws, rules and policies administered by the DEQ affect farmers, food processors, agribusinesses and rural communities.

“The economy of rural areas relies heavily on the success of the agriculture and food industry and we want to ensure the regulations are not impairing these areas,” Gilbert said. “This roundtable will help the DEQ refine its policies to better promote rural economies.”

The roundtable will provide advice and recommendations to the department and legislative committees on policies that affect agricultural businesses. This advice should help limit regulations that restrict job creation and retention within the industry with the end goal being to improve the rural economy.

The roundtable will consist of at least seven individuals invited by the DEQ director. The director must consult with the chairpersons of the agriculture standing committees in the House and Senate on who to invite to the roundtable meetings.

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